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SERMON

Preached at the

PARISH-CHURCH

OF

St. DUNSTAN in the WEST,

On Sunday Dec. the 23^d. 1711.

By GEORGE SMALRIDGE, D.D.
Dean of *Carlisle*, and Chaplain in Ordinary
to Her Majesty.

Published at the Request of the VESTRY
of the said PARISH.

L O N D O N,

Printed for, and Sold by Chr. Coningsby, at the
Ink-Bottle against Clifford's-Linn-Gate in Fetter-
Lane, Fleetstreet; and Jonah Bowyer at the Rose
in Ludgate Street, 1711.

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in Ludgate Street, 1711.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

TO THE
Gentlemen of the Vestry,
AND OTHER
The Inhabitants of the Parish
OF
St. DUNSTAN in the WEST.

GENTLEMEN,
HAD it been Decid'd for Me, after
the many and great Favors I had
receiv'd from You, to deny Any Re-
quest, which You thought it proper to make,
This Sermon, which was no more Intended
for the Press, than it is Fit for it, had ne-
ver been made Publick. But since You were
not pleas'd to admit of any Excuse for My
not Printing, I may with the greater Con-
fidence

The Epistle Dedicatory.

confidence hope to be Excus'd by Others for Printing so Imperfect a Discourse. Your Affection to the Preacher, and the Occasion on which it was preach'd gave it some Advantage in the Hearing, which must be lost with the Cool and Impartial Reader. But This will give Me no Uneasiness, whilst I have reason to Hope, that What in the Delivery You seem'd to be affected with, may, when recollected, make a more lasting Impression, for the benefit of Your Souls.

I pray God to Recompose to You with the Blessings of This World, and of the Next, those Kind Regards You have shewn to,

GENTLEMEN,

Your most Affectionate Friend,

and Humble Servant,

George Smalridge.

TIM. V. 22

Neither be partaker of other Men's Sins.

IN my last Discourse I open'd unto you the Nature, and prov'd the Necessity of Restitution. I then took notice, that it extended to All sorts of Wrongs; and that where-ever Any Injuries of Any kind were Done, there a Reparation suitable to the Injuries was necessary: But because Most Persons, when they hear the Duty of Restitution press'd, are apt to restrain it to Such Wrongs as Men Do or Suffer in their Temporal Concerns; because These are the Injuries which are most loudly Complain'd of, and for which Satisfaction is most importunately demanded; whilst Other Wrongs, of a much more mischievous Tendency, are Done without Remorse, and often Suffer'd without Regret; because Humane Laws have provided for the Reparation of Such Injuries as affect Men's Properties, whilst no Provision is by them made against Wrongs done to the Souls of Men; because We who are entrusted with the Care of Men's Souls, are most nearly concern'd to Avert or to Remove these Evils, to which they are liable in

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their

their Spiritual Capacities; because Such Injuries as These are most apt to be Overlook'd, and yet at the same time most proper to be Attended to; because several Persons, who out of Conscience, or rather out of Honour, would Scorn to do those Lesser Injuries, do without Scruple allow themselves in the practice of these Greater Wrongs; because Those, whose plentiful Condition in this World places them above the Temptation of enriching themselves by defrauding others of their Worldly Goods, are generally most apt to do the greatest prejudice to the Souls of Men; for these Reasons, I think it may be proper to consider distinctly the Several Ways of doing Wrong to the Souls of Men; that Those, whose Consciences accuse them of Any of these Wrongs, may apply to themselves what hath been Before deliver'd concerning the indispensable Necessity of Restitution. Now We do then Wrong to the Souls of Men, when We are in any regard *Partakers of their Sins*; and We are then *Partakers of their Sins*, when We use any Means to induce them to Sin; or when We do not Use those Means which are in our power, and which We are in duty bound to Use, for Preserving or Reclaiming them from Sin. But that We may not be lost in Generals, that what I have to offer upon this Subject may lie more level to All Capacities, and be brought

brought nearer home to the Conscience of Men, I shall descend yet Lower to Particulars; and point out if not All, yet the Principal and most usual, ways of Participating in other Mens Sins.

1st. We may be partakers of other Mens Sins by poisoning the Souls of Men with Erroneous and Wicked Principles.

By Erroneous Principles, I do not mean such as are any ways contrary to Truth, but only such as are contrary to Those Truths, the Knowledge and Belief of which are made the Conditions of our Salvation. Now such Destructive Errors either concern Doctrines of Faith, or Rules of Practice; for in order to our Salvation, God hath propos'd several Truths, to which We are requir'd to give our Assent; and hath enjoyn'd several Laws, by which our Actions ought to be regulated: Those therefore who by their Doctrines endeavour either to Subvert such Saving Truths, or to Relax the force of such Binding Laws, contribute all they can to the hindrance of Men's Salvation. Some seem to be of Opinion, that it is wholly Indifferent what Men Believe, provided their Actions be agreeable to the Laws of God; that Men at the last day shall not be judg'd by their Opinions, but by their Lives; that no Enquiry will

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be then made, whether they were Right or Wrong in their Principles, but only, whether they were Regular or Irregular in their Practices: But tho' it is Perhaps true, that greater Stress is laid upon our Actions than upon our Sentiments; though it is Certainly true, that No Men shall be sav'd for the Orthodoxy of their Opinions, whose Lives are contrary to the Precepts of our Holy Religion; yet, since the Gospel consists as well of Doctrines, which We are requir'd to Believe, as of Commands, which We are bound to Obey; since the Veracity of God is as much impeach'd by our not assenting to the Truth of what He Affirms, as His Authority is affronted by our not complying with what He Enjoyns; since Faith and Obedience are made the Joyn't terms of our Salvation; since We are in the Gospel Commanded to Believe such and such Truths, and consequently, however We may distinguish between Matters of Faith and Matters of Duty, Faith it self is as much a Christian Duty, as any Other, being equally the Object of a Positive Command; since our Understandings ought to be as much in Subjection to God as our Wills; We may as justly be shut out from Heaven for the Perverseness of our Opinions, as for the Sinfulness of our Lives; and therefore Those Reflections may as deservedly be charg'd with doing hurt

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The Death of Carlist's Sermon,

Subject; there is a peculiar Sharpness of Language, and Acrimony of Style, Observable in their Writings; when they animadvert upon Seducers: They, who upon all other occasions breathe forth, but Peace, Love, Gentleness, Goodness, Meekness, are yet very Bitter in their Invectives, and not at all sparing in their Censures, when they caution their Disciples against being misled by such Pestilent Deceivers.

St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans upon the mention of Some, who had either themselves falsely Affirm'd, or falsely accus'd the Apostle of Affirming, that Evil might be done for a good End, (a Doctrine not peculiar to the Romanists of that Age) doubts not peremptorily to pronounce of such Men, that their Damnation is just. The Same St. Paul, when Elymas the Sorcerer sought to turn away the Deputy from the Faith, address'd Himself to him in such Words, as express great Warmth of Zeal, and Heat of Indignation; and yet He is declar'd to have been fill'd with the Holy Ghost, when setting his Eyes upon Him, He said: O full of all Subtilty and all Mischief; thou Child of the Devil, thou Enemy of All Righteousness; wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? Acts 13. 9, 10. The Same Apostle is not afraid to Pronounce an Anathema, and to add the greater Weight to it, to Reiterate it
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against

against even an Angel from Heaven, if He should go about to corrupt the Purity of the Gospel. There be some, saith He, that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ. But though We, or an Angel from Heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you, than that which We have preached unto you, let Him be Accursed. As We said before, so say I now again, If any one preach any other Gospel unto you, than that ye have receiv'd, let Him be accursed, Gal. i. 7, 8, 9. Every Epistle of St. Paul abounds with such severe Reproofs, as I have here given you a Specimen of, against Seducers: Reproofs, which carry with them such an Edge of Sarcasm, that did not the Heinousness of the Sin justify the Sharpness of the Reproof, the Apostle would seem to have overlookt that Precept, which He gives to Others, That they should put away from them all Bitterness, and Wrath, and Anger, and Clamour, and Evil speaking.

The Blessed Jesus Himself, who bids us to learn of Him, because He is meek, and lowly of Heart, who came into the World not to Curse, but to Bless, and who accordingly enter'd upon his Prophetical Office by preaching Beatitudes, doth, notwithstanding, with great Plainness and Freedom of Speech, with a more than ordinary Vehemence of Spirit, and Sharpness of Language, denounce repeated Woes against

gainst those Scribes and Pharisees, who made the Com-
 mandment of God of none effect thro' their false Glosses,
 who by their pernicious Doctrines shut up the King-
 dom of Heaven, neither going in themselves nor suffer-
 ing them that would enter to go in, who compass'd Sea
 and Land to make Proselytes, and when they were
 made, made them twofold more the Children of Hell
 than themselves. These He again and again styles Hy-
 pocrites, Blind Guides, Serpents, a Generation of Kelpers;
 and of These He declares, That they shall not escape
 the Damnation of Hell. Now I am sensible how ill it becomes the Ministers of
 the Gospel to be Over liberal in pronouncing against
 Any sort of Men the dreadful Sentence of Damna-
 tion; As the very Sound of it carries with it Amaze-
 ment and Terror, so We ought never to utter it
 without Fear and Trembling; As it becomes none
 but Madmen to throw about Firebrands, Arrows and
 Death, so is it proper for None but wild Enthusiasts
 to thunder out Hell and Damnation; By being too
 free in such Censures We render them Familiar and
 Cheap, and bring them into Contempt, and I
 know of no Privilege We have to Curse People more
 than Others; nor why We should not be thought to
 Curse, if We should declare Men Accurs'd of God,
 out of Levity, or Passion. But whilst We guide our
 selves

selves by the Infalible Rule of God's Word; whilst We pass no other Sentence than God Himself hath Pass'd; whilst We apply this Sentence not to Persons but Things; whilst We warn Men of their Sin, and Danger, not with a design to Upbraid or Insult them, but with an honest Intention of Rescuing them, We may, without breach of Christian Charity, without Transgressing the Bounds of Moderation Pronounce, may, We cannot without Uncharitableness, without betraying our Trust, But pronounce those Menaces, which have gone forth from the Throne of the Almighty against False Teachers.

In these Divine Menaces those Men are most deeply concern'd, who make it their Study and Business, to infect Unsettled Minds with such Pesticent Principles as at Once overthrow all Religion and Morality: who venture Boldly to Affirm, and expect that the boldness of their Assertions should be taken for a sufficient Proof, that the Notions of Religion were at first started by Crafty and Designing Men in order to Keep the Ignorant and Credulous in Awe; that the World was made by Chance, that all Things in it happen by Chance, and that it is no purpose for any One to live by Rule; that after Death there is Nothing, And that Death it self

is to be lookt upon as Nothing : that the Hopes of Heaven have no other Foundation than the Pride of some Ambitious Zealots, who promise themselves Crowns and Sceptres there ; and that the Fears of Hell are fit only for those Slavish Souls to entertain, who having been scar'd with the Stories of Spirits and Fiends, whilst they were Children, have never been able to recover their Wits since ; In short, that Good and Evil are Arbitrary Distinctions ; that they differ not in the Things themselves, but in the Sentiments of those who speak of them ; that what is esteem'd Good in Some Places, or at Some Times, or by Some Persons, is in Other Places, or at Other Times, or by Other Persons reputed Indifferent, or perhaps Evil ; and that it would be foolish to confine Our selves to one sort of Actions, which Some Few Persons have agreed to call Good, since Others as Wise as they find no such Inherent Goodness in them ; Or to refrain from Another sort of Actions, which they, who have now lost the Relish which they Once had of them, or who perhaps have a Mind to engross them to themselves, have thought to fright Others from, by giving them the Name of Sinful and Damnable. That such Principles as these have been not only whisper'd in Private, but talkt Openly in Publick places of Resort ;

Resort; that Such pernicious Doctrines have been Embrac'd, Profess'd, and Propagated amongst Us; that they have been every where spread abroad without reserve, consign'd to Writing, and deliver'd down in Books for the Poisoning of succeeding Ages as well as of the Present, is the Grief of all Good Men, and the Triumph of Libertines: That the Teaching, Scattering and Abetting of such Atheistical Principles hath a direct Tendency to the Destruction of Souls, is as certain, as that We have Souls capable of Eternal Happiness, and liable to Eternal Perdition.

But although the Menaces denounc'd against Seducers do principally concern Such as set up for gaining Proselytes to Atheism, Yet do they also reach all Teachers of False and Wicked Principles of what Kind soever. Whatever Doctrine slackens the Obligation of God's Laws, whether it misrepresents the Laws themselves by representing Good Actions as not at all Good, or not so Necessary, as they really are; or by representing Evil Actions, as not at all Sinful, or less Sinful, as to their Degree, than they truly are; Or whether it weakens the Motives to Obedience, by representing the Glories of Heaven, as not Attainable, or not Worth our Attaining, or not so Great as the Scri-

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ptures declare them to be; or by representing the Torments of Hell as Imaginary, or as less Grievous, or as less Durable, than the Holy Spirit hath in the Gospel taught Us they are; Such Doctrine, whereever it is receiv'd, hath a fatal Efficacy towards the Corruption of Manners; and All who teach such pernicious Doctrines, do the Devils proper Work in destroying Mens Souls; and are to be rankt amongst the Partakers of other Mens Sins, as having not only a Share, but the most Principal Share in the Guilt of those Sins, into which they lead Others by their Ungodly and Wicked Principles.

A 2d. Way of Partaking in other Men's Sins is by giving them Evil Counsels. Under Evil Counsels I comprehend All those Methods, which Men make use of to perswade Others to Sin, without endeavouring to represent the sinful Action they perswade them to, as Innocent: For Those, who go about to corrupt Others by making that appear to be Indifferent, which God hath pronounced to be Sinful, properly fall under the former Class of Evil Teachers: But when the Sinfulness of an Action is Own'd, or at least not Denied, when we perswade Men to do what in their Opinion is unlawful, with

without endeavouring to Alter their Opinion about it; when We dissemble the Sinfulness of an Action and display the Pleasure that Attends it, or the Profit that will Accrue from it; when by Promises, or Threats; by Command, or by Entreaty; by Force, or by Insinuation, We prevail with Men to do what their Consciences disapprove, We are then guilty of Partaking in their Sin, and of destroying their Souls by our Evil Counsels. It was by this Method that Sin first came into the World; Evil Counsel was the first Engine, which was employ'd by the Tempter. It was acknowledg'd on all Hands, that God had said, *Thou shalt not eat of the Tree that is in the midst of the Garden*; but the Serpent, (by shewing the Woman that the Tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the Eyes, and a tree to be desir'd to make one wise) beguild the Woman, and she did eat; and the same Baile, which she had been caught with, she us'd with the same Success for the engaging her Husband. So that by the Suggestion of these two Evil Counsellors, Guilt and Punishment, Sin and Death were deriv'd upon the whole Race of Mankind.

And as Sin was first brought into the World by Evil Counsel, so hath it ever since thriven well by the same Means. Some Persons are by the bene-

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fit of a Vigorous and Religious Education Unacquainted with Sin; There are several Kinds of Vices, which they are wholly Strangers to; and to these Persons Evil Advisers are Pernicious by Suggesting to them the Commission of such Sins, as would otherwise never have come into their Thoughts. Some there are of an Easy, Soft, and Pliable Temper; willing to Please every One, and careful to give no Offence; and to Such as these, Evil Counsels are Fatal, because those Sinful Actions, which of themselves they have no Inclinations to, or which perhaps they are Averse from, they had yet rather give Way to, than incur the Displeasure of those, whom by want of Compliance they might Disoblige. Some there are, who are naturally Timorous and Diffident, Willing they are to Taste the Pleasures of Sin, but they have not Courage enough to venture upon it: And to these Evil Counsels are Destructive, as they Embolden them to the doing of That by Instigation and Encouragement, which of Themselves they durst not attempt. Some would be willing to Sin, if they could tell how to do it with Convenience and Privacy, and Evil Counsellors finish the Ruine of these Men, by furnishing them with proper Opportunities of Sinning. Pleasure hath its Charms, which are not easie to be resisted by the Young;

Young ; and Profit hath its Attractives, whereby it prevails upon the Old : So that the Former will be led away by the Evil Counsels of those who represent the Ways of Sin to be ways of Pleasantness ; and the Latter will be seduc'd by the Advices of Such, whose Maxim it is, that Godliness should always give place to Gain. Now if Wicked Counsels are on so many Accounts Dangerous ; if they have so many Ways of depraving Mens Manners ; if the Unexperient'd Sinner is instructed by them, the Good natur'd Missed, the Timorous Hardened : If Men of all Ages, of all Complexions, all Tempers, are apt to be Perverted by them, then may those, who employ them to these Sinful Purposes, be justly charg'd with being Coadjutors to Satan in compassing the Destruction of Souls, and Co-partners with Him in those Sins which other Men commit through their Instigation.

How Heinous, how Exorbitant, how Intolerable this Guilt of drawing Others into Sin by Evil Counsel is in God's sight, We may judge by the Severity of that Law, which He was pleas'd to ordain against those, who allur'd their Brethren from the Service of God to Idolatrous Worship. *If thy Brother, the Son of thy Mother, or thy Son, or thy Daughter, or the Wife of thy Bosom, or thy Friend,*
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which is as thine own Soul; entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go, and serve other Gods, Thou shalt not consent unto them, or hearken unto them; neither shall thine Eye pity Him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal Him. But thou shalt surely Kill Him; thine Hand shall be first upon Him to put Him to Death; and afterwards the Hands of all the People; And thou shalt stone Him with Stones that He die, because He hath sought to thrust thee away from the Land thy God; Deut. 13. 6, 8, 9, 10. The Enticement of Others to Idolatry was, it seems, so abominable a Sin, that He who was guilty of it, lost all Title to Pity and Compassion, It loosened at once all the Ties of Blood, Relation, and Friendship. How close, and intimate soever the Union was betwixt the Enticer and the Person, on whom such an Attempt was made; though they were of the Same Blood; though they were but One Flesh; Yea, though they were but One Soul, upon the suggestion of Such Evil Counsel, that Union was immediately dissolved; the Parent must bear Testimony against his Child, the Husband against his Wife, the Friend against Him, who was as his Own Soul, because None of these Relations could make the Party so Dear, as the Wicked Counsel He gave, rendered Him Odious. It was hard enough for Persons so nearly related to In-

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form against their Relations; but this was not sufficient, unless they were also his Executioners. It may not be pretended, that it is as great a Crime to allure Persons to Other Sins, as to Idolatry: but since Mens Souls may as effectually be destroy'd by the habitual practice of any Heinous Sin, as by Idolatry it self; since all Deadly Sin hath in it something of the Nature of Idolatry, as it draws Us from the Love of God to the Love of the Creature; Those who by Evil Counsels allure unwary Persons to the Commission of any Enormous Sin, are to be lookt upon as Seducers; and though the Persons misled by them have no Commission to Revenge the Wrong done to their Souls upon such Pernicious Counsellors, Yet without Repentance it will certainly be recompens'd upon them by Him, *to whom Vengeance belongeth*, and who will be true to His Word in repaying it.

A 3d. Way of being Partakers in Other Mens Sins, is by giving them Evil Example. Men Speak to each Other by their Actions as well as by their Words; there is a Kind of Language in what We Do in the Sight of Each Other, as well as in what We Speak in the Hearing of Each Other: As it is in the Power of Wicked Men to tempt Others to

Sin, and to be Partakers of the Sin of Others, by Pernicious Counsels, so also is it in their Power, and too often in their Will, to pollute Others by the Infection of a Bad Example. And this Infection is like to Spread the farther, and to prove the more Fatal, because the Generality of Men are apt to be govern'd not so much by Rule, or by Counsel, as by Authority and Example. Many Persons act as if they had no Reason, no Judgment, no Conscience of their Own, but were altogether guided and sway'd by the Actions of Other Men: What they see Others do, that they do as it were Mechanically: All their Motions depend upon the Motions of those by whom they are Influenc'd: they seem to be Animated by Another's Soul; and what they Observe That Person to do, whom they have made their Guide and Leader, That they by a Secret and scarcely Resistible Force find themselves disposed to follow. There is the same Agreement and Correspondency between Their Actions and the Actions of those whom they Imitate, as was in the Prophet Ezekiel's Vision, betwixt the Movements of the Wheels, and the Living Creatures; *When the Living Creatures went, the Wheels went by them, and when the Living Creatures were lift up from the Earth, the Wheels were lift up: When those went, these went; and when*

when those stood, these stood: for the Spirit of the Living Creatures was in the Wheels. Thus Forcibly, I say, are many Men led by the Examples of Others; They trouble not themselves to enquire, whether what they do is Lawful, or Unlawful; It is sufficient to them that they are not Singular, but do the same Thing which Others do, as well as They. Men learn to Live, and Act, as much as they do to Speak or Write by Imitation, and whatever Defects there are in the Original, the Same and More will be sure to appear in the Copy.

Now if Humane Nature is such a perfect Mimick; if Most are apt to be Sway'd rather by Example than by Rule; if Example hath in it such a Contagious Influence, It is plain, that All who set Ill Examples are Answerable not only for their Own Personal Sins, but also for those Sins, which Others commit by their Example.

Actions in themselves Indifferent become Sins, when by giving Scandal they lead Others to commit Sin: Hence is it, that the Apostles do so often, and so largely insist upon the strict Obligation which All Christians are under to abridge their Christian Liberty in the Use of Things otherwise Lawful, for fear of Offending, or Scandalizing their Brethren: Take heed, saith St. Paul, *least by any Means this Li-*

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erty of Yours become a Stumbling-Block to them that are Weak. For if Any Man see Thee, which hast Knowledge, sit at Meat in the Idol's Temple, shall not the Conscience of Him that is Weak, be emboldned to Eat those Things which are Offer'd to Idols: And through thy Knowledge shall the Weak Brother Perish, for whom Christ died? But when Ye Sin so against the Brethren, and wound their Weak Conscience, Ye Sin against Christ. 1 Cor. 8. 9, 10, 11, 12. Now if Those, who do Things in themselves Innocent, are said to lay a Stumbling-Block in the Way of those, who through Weakness may take an Occasion from thence to do things Forbidden; if They are accus'd of Destroying their Brethren, for whom Christ died, of Sinning against their Brethren, of Wounding their Consciences, of Sinning against Christ.----- How much more deservedly may This Accusation be brought against Those, who lay Stumbling-Blocks in the Ways of Others, by doing Actions Notoriously and Confessedly Sinful? Actions not only in Appearance, but in Reality Evil; Actions, that will appear Evil not only to Some, but to All, who observe them; Actions that would in themselves be Damnable, though they gave no Scandal, and are worthy of an Heavier Judgment, because they give great Scandal, and betray Others into Sin and Damnation.

A 4th.

A 4th. Way of Partaking of Other Mens Sins, is, by with-holding from them that Necessary Instruction, which by the Relation We bear to them, We are Oblig'd to give them.

God, when He publish'd his Laws to the People of Israel, charg'd them not only to take Heed to themselves and to Keep their Own Souls diligently, but also to Teach them their Sons, and their Sons Sons. And in the Gospel, We are taught, that it is the Indispensable Duty of Parents to bring up their Children in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord. Those Parents therefore who Rob their Children of this Necessary Instruction, which is Entail'd upon them by the Law of God, and of which they cannot be Disinherited without the greatest Injury to their Souls, will be Responsible for those Sins of their Children, which they commit for want of Such Instruction. It hath always justly been accounted as an Instance of the Greatest Barbarity for Parents to Deny their Children that Food which is Necessary for the Nourishment and Support of their Bodies. Can a Woman forget her Sucking-Child, that she should not have Compassion on the Son of her Womb? Even the Sea-Monsters draw out their Breasts, they give Suck to their Young Ones; The Daughter of my People is become Cruel;
the

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the Tongue of the Sucking-Child cleaveth unto the Roof of the Mouth for Thirst; the Young Children lack Bread, and no Man breaketh it to them. Now, is the Want of Bodily Food thus Lamentable; is the Neglect of Supplying it thus Inhumane? Must those Parents be Destitute of all Bowels, who are Deaf to the Cries of their Children, Famishing for lack of their Bodily Sustenance? And is the Want of Spiritual Food an Evil less Calamitous; or the With-holding of it a Cruelty less Odious? If any provide not for His Own, and especially for those of His Own House, He, in the Judgment of St. Paul, bath denied the Faith, and is worse than an Infidel. And if Christians are Oblig'd to Supply the Temporal Wants of their Domesticks under the Pain of Forfeiting their Title to Christianity, then Ought those, who take no Care to Relieve their Spiritual Wants, to look upon Themselves as even worse than those, who in the Opinion of the Apostle, are worse than Infidels.

This Censure ought to be seriously consider'd both by Parents, and by those who are in the place of Parents, and who have bound themselves by Solemn Vows in the presence of God and his Church to Instruct those, for whom they are Sureties, in All those things, which a Christian ought to Know and to Believe to his Souls Health; and to take care that they be brought
up

up to lead a Godly and a Christian Life. Every Such Person doth by the very Nature of the Engagement into which He enters say unto God what Judah said unto Israel his Father, *I will be Surety for the Child; of my Hand shalt thou require Him; if I bring him not unto thee, and set Him before thee, then let Me bear the blame for Ever.* That they may not bear this blame, that they may not incur the Displeasure of their Heavenly Father, it is their Duty to use their best Endeavours, as Judah did, that No Mischief do befall Them, for whom they became Sureties; this is a Debt, which they have bound upon their Consciences by the Strongest Ties, and which if they do not discharge, they must expect to be impleaded at God's Tribunal by those Angels, who are peculiarly concern'd for these Little Ones.

It might look Partial, if in enumerating the several Ways of partaking in other Mens Sins, and in specifying that particular Way of Communicating in the Sins of Others by withholding from them that necessary Instruction, which they of right challenge from Us, I should take no Notice of the Strict Obligation which the Ministers of the Gospel are under to Feed their respective Flocks, and of their great Guile, if they are Unfaithful in the Discharge
of

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of their Ministerial Duties. What God declar'd to the Prophet Ezekiel, is Applicable to All, who by any Ties are bound to watch over the Souls of Others, Son of Man, I have made thee a Watchman unto the House of Israel; therefore hear the Word at my Mouth, and give them warning from Me; When I say unto the Wicked, thou shalt surely die, and thou givest Him not Warning, nor speakest to warn the Wicked from his Wicked Way, to save his Life, the same Wicked Man shall Die in his Iniquity; but his Blood will I require at thine Hand. Again, when a Righteous Man doth turn from his Righteousness, and commit Iniquity, He shall die; because thou hast not given Him Warning He shall die in his Sin; but his Blood will I require at thine Hand; Ezek. 3. 17, 18. &c.

That This may neither be Your Case, Nor Mine; that Neither You may suffer for want of Taking, nor I for want of Giving Necessary Warning, I do now, my Dearly beloved Brethren, most earnestly beseech You to call to Remembrance all those Dissuasives from Impiety and Sin, all those Exhortations to Holiness and Virtue, which I have through the Course of my Ministry, with much Weakness and Infirmary, but with an Honest Mind, and an Hearty Concern for Your Eternal Welfare made unto You. I beg of You for My Sake, for Your Sakes,

Sakes, for the Sake of Jesus Christ, in whose Name, and by whose Authority I have spoken unto You, that having by Your Own free choice set Me to be Your Watchman, You would hearken to this the last Voice of the Trumpet, which I shall Sound under that Character; You would take This the Last Warning, which I am to give You in that Relation and Capacity. The Word, which I have heard at God's Mouth, You have often heard at Mine; and I do now once more declare it unto You; Namely, that if Sinners do not turn from their Evil Ways, they shall surely Die in their Iniquities, the Sword of God's Vengeance shall come upon them, and their Blood shall be upon their Head; but that if even Now they return from their Sins, and Hence-forwards do that which is Lawful and Right, they shall surely Live, they shall not Die. Let this Plain, this Repeated, this Final Declaration of One, who sincerely Loves and Regards You, and who hath had all the Testimonies He could wish, more than He could Expect, of Affection and Esteem from You, sink deep into Your Hearts, and have the desired Influence upon Your Lives, to the many and Signal Proofs You have shewn of Your Good Will towards Me; and the most Valuable, the most Acceptable,

ceptable, the most Proper Pledge of Your Love to Me, that of permitting Me to be an Instrument under God of Your Everlasting Salvation.

Oh, how Happy would it be both for You and for Me, if when I come to render an Account of my Ministry to Christ my Lord and Master, I could do it in the Same Words, in which He gave unto His Father an Account of the Discharge of His Mediatorial Office! *I have glorified thee on the Earth; I have finished the Work, which thou gavest Me to do; I have manifested thy Name unto the Men which thou gavest Me out of the World.—I have given unto Them the Words, which thou gavest unto Me, and they have received them: All Mine are Thine; those that thou gavest Me have I Kept, and None of them is lost.*

—May God in his Infinite Mercy Pardon my Defects in Preaching His Word, and Yours in Hearing it! May the good Seed, which hath been Sown, and that, which shall be Sown, take deep Root Downwards, and bring forth abundant Fruit Upwards! May those, who shall Follow Me, be as faithful and able Stewards of the Mysteries of God, as those, who have gone Before Me! May the same Kind Reception and Encouragement, which my Ministry hath found among You, be transferr'd together with the Duty and Burden of it, to Him,
who

who shall Succeed Me! May the Same Unanimity amongst Your Selves, the Same Love of one Another, the Same Affection to Your Prince and Country, the Same Reverence for our Excellent Church and its Orthodox Ministers, for which You have been hitherto Celebrated, be still Preserv'd, be still Conspicuous amongst You!

And, Now, Brethren, I commend You to God, and to the Word of His Grace, which is able to build you up, and to give You an Inheritance among all them which are Sanctified.—Of which Inheritance, &c.

F I N I S.

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A Sermon Preach'd before the Right Worshipful the Court of
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